We claim:

1. A secure method of authenticating an identification card comprising providing an identification card having certain unique information recorded thereon, scanning said information to produce a digital copy of said information, and determining part of said secure authenticating system from said digital copy of said information.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said part of said secure authenticating system comprises first pixel values at selected locations on said digital copy of said information.

3. The method of claim 2 including determining said selected locations according to a characteristic value function algorithm.

4. The method of claim 3 including recording said first pixel values on said identification card in human-readable and/or machine-readable form.

5. The method of claim 5 including storing said digital copy of said information at a first remote location.

6. The method of claim 5 including providing a digital processor at a secure second remote location.

7. The method of claim 6 including storing said characteristic value function algorithm at said secure second remote location.

8. The method of claim 7 including sending said pixel values and said digital copy of said information to said digital processor at said secure second remote location.

9. The method of claim 8 further including applying said characteristic value function algorithm to said digital copy of said information at said secure second remote location to determine second pixel values at said selected locations.

10. The method of claim 9 further comprising comparing said second pixel values determined from said digital copy of said information at said secure second remote location with said first pixel values recorded on said identification card.

11. The method of claim 10 further including comparing said digital copy of said information with said information on said identification card.

12. An authenticating system for an identification card comprising an identification card having certain unique information thereon, means for scanning said unique information to produce a digital copy of said information, means for determining first pixel values at selected locations on said digital copy of said information according to a characteristic value function algorithm, and means for recording said first pixel values on said identification card in human-readable and/or machine-readable form.

13. An authenticating system as in claim 12 further comprising means for recording said digital copy of said information at a first remote location.

14. An authenticating system as in claim 13 further including a digital processor and said characteristic value function algorithm located at a secure second remote location.

15. An authenticating system as in claim 14 further comprising means for sending said pixel values and said digital copy of said information to said secure second remote location.

16. An authenticating system as in claim 15 further including means at said secure second remote location for causing said processor to apply said characteristic value function algorithm to said digital copy of said information to determine second pixel values at said selected locations using said digital processor.

17. An authenticating system as in claim 16 further including means at said secure second remote location for comparing said second pixel values from said digital copy of said information with said first pixel values previously recorded on said identification card.

18. An authenticating system as in claim 17 further including means for transmitting the result of said comparison for viewing at another location.

19. An identification card including certain unique information thereon, said card also having thereon part of a secure authenticating system for said card.

20. An identification card as in claim 19 wherein said part of a secure authenticating system for said card comprises pixel values from selected

locations on said unique information, said pixel values produced by scanning said unique information to produce a digital copy of said unique information.

21. An identification card as in claim 20 wherein said locations are selected according to a characteristic value function algorithm.

22. An identification card as in claim 21 wherein said pixel values are recorded on said card in human-readable and/or machine-readable form.

23. An identification card as in claim 22 wherein said characteristic value function algorithm is recorded in a remote secure location.

24. An identification card as in claim 23 wherein said digital copy of said information is stored in a remote secure location.